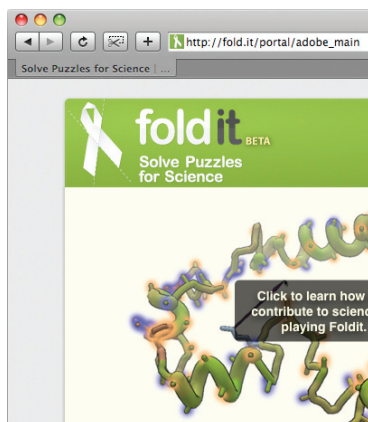
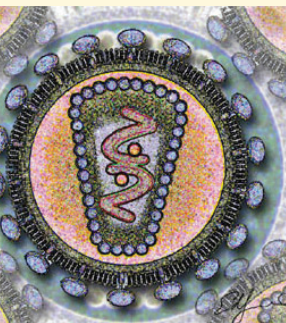




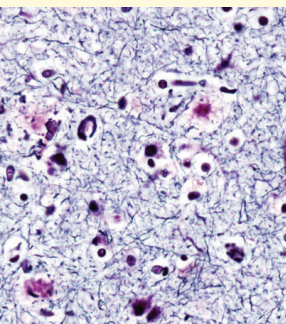
By playing
Foldit, you can
help scientists
study proteins
to cure disease.



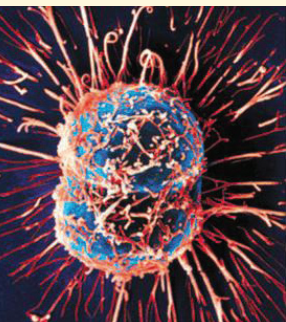
DISEASES FOLDIT
COULD EVENTUALLY
HELP CURE



AIDS



ALZHIEMERS



CANCER

CYBERSPACE

In The Fold

Mom wanted you to be a doctor, but you were too busy playing videogames to take the MCATs? Now is your chance to make amends.

Foldit, a new online game, taps our inner competitive streak to advance a key area of medicine: the understanding of how proteins form. Proteins are the engines of cellular life—they are, in layman's terms, what make cells work—and hold the secret to many of the world's worst viruses. Viruses use particular proteins to reproduce, and by figuring out the precise shape of these proteins, we'll be well on our way to a cure. The problem, however, is that computers, for all their powers, aren't terribly adept at determining the shape of proteins. That's where you come in.

At Foldit, researchers post initial guesses of how a protein might be shaped, and challenge players to improve the guesses by making the virtual protein more compact (proteins naturally form the most compact shape possible). The more compact your protein model, the higher your score. It may not be as fun as Halo, but it's a lot more helpful.

—LUCAS LAURSEN

KENYA

Out of Africa

Hiram Kariuki is unemployed, lives on \$80 a month, and can't afford breakfast, but he's a local star in his Nairobi slum, thanks to his appearances in the movies of the **Ghetto Film Club**. Founded in 2006 by 26-year-old Patrick Shomba Mwai, a part-time production assistant on a Kenyan sitcom, the GFC has its offices in Kariuki's shack in the Dandora slum and, last year, with almost no money, made nine popular short movies that played in local social halls. Led by Mwai, a dozen members of the 60-strong youth group borrowed equipment from resident media professionals, taught themselves how to use it, and shot most of the stories in a single day.

All the films address life in the slums of Nairobi. *Ghetto President*, produced in November, 2007, was especially prescient. It told the story of a corrupt member of parliament who hires thugs from the slums to try to eliminate a competing candidate. A month after the filming, Kenya's divisive election caused epic street battles between unemployed young men. "Without films, we would just be criminals," says Mwai. "There are so many people around here who don't have anything to do. But they have talent, so I'm building a platform for them." —EMILY MEEHAN

Kenya's Ghetto Film Club makes movies about life in Nairobi's slums, on a shoestring budget.



PHOTO Martha Moroni